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FOREWORD

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THEORIES OF YIN-YANG AND WU-HSING AND THEIR APPLICATION IN CHINESE
TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

[Following is a translation of an article written by the Institutes of Chinese Traditional Medicine, Ch'ing-chu Chien-kuo Shih-chou-nien I-hsueh K'o-hsueh Ch'eng-chiu Lun-wen Chi, Volume I, Peiping, December 1959, pp. 298-305.]

[Introduction]

The theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing [the five elements--metal, wood, water, fire and earth] which were constructed upon the basis of dialectical materialism have become the theoretical foundation of our nation's medical science for thousands of years. These theories have always been considered a guide for clinical practices. Hence studies on the theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing are very important for the further development of Chinese traditional medicine.

Clinical practices and theories of Chinese traditional medicine have been greatly developed in recent years. There have been a number of achievements in the promotion for the continued development of the theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing. For instance, many western-style physicians, after having learned Chinese traditional medicine, have extensively adopted the theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing as a guide for their clinical practices. Some western-style physicians have explained Chinese traditional medicine in modern technical terms and methods. Some have even begun to apply the philosophical viewpoint of dialectical materialism in the pursuit for profounder investigations. According to preliminary statistics, there have been more than 70 important theses published related to this field. These theses and discussions have great value in advancing the theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing. There has also been a certain degree of development in recent years concerning the differing views held on these two theories through discussions and publications. There are two principal opinions:

The first group, a minority, does not understand the significance of the two theories in clinical practice, so they advocate scrapping the theory of Wu-hsing and want only to preserve the theory of Yin-yang.

The second group, the majority, acknowledge the fact that Wu-hsing and Yin-yang are scientific and inseparable and contain elements of dialectical materialism. Effects exerted on clinical practice and the progress of the medical treatment are very great. Therefore, these two theories should be given positive approval. However, since

these theories were originated thousands of years ago, there must be factors which were limited by the environment of that time; consequently, these shortcomings should be studied, examined and explained by us.

Generally speaking, in recent years, they have been able to attain certain achievements along these lines. We have synthesized related data in this field with our own knowledge and experience and have prepared the short introduction which follows:

[Yin-yang and Wu-hsing]

The theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing were originated very early. Wu-hsing was discussed in the "Hung fan" (洪範) Chapter of Shang-shu (尚書) and Yin-yang was created extensively in I-chuan (易傳). In the transitional period from Ch'in to Han, these theories were very popular and became a part of our philosophical system in the ancient period.

In the theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing, all things are considered to be composed of moving matters, the most fundamental matter being Ch'i. Pure Ch'i ascends and becomes heaven; turbid Ch'i descends and becomes earth. The amassing of Ch'i becomes visible liquids and solid matter. The dispersing of Ch'i becomes invisible gaseous matter. Yin-yang and Wu-hsing are the law of motion of Ch'i. Yin-yang explains the law of contradictions of the motion of matter. Wu-hsing, however, concretely describes the relationship of things by the law of contradiction governing matter. Our traditional medicine, under the guidance of dialectical materialism, considers matter to be primary. As mentioned in Nei-Ching, "The heart is the king of organs from which inspiration springs....the liver is the general of the organs from which thoughts emanate." Here we can see that inspiration and thought are produced by the activities of the organs and matter. (Note: The term "organs" in Chinese traditional medicine represents both anatomical and functional concepts; consequently it cannot be simply interpreted as "organs" in the normal sense.) Therefore, Yin-yang and Wu-hsing were philosophical concepts of an unsophisticated form of dialectical materialism which existed during our nation's antiquity. The emergence of these theories was a tremendous step forward for philosophical circles of that time. Stimulated by these theories, the natural sciences of our antiquity developed greatly. The ancient physicians, guided by these theories, established a systematic theoretical foundation for medicine by utilizing these theories and summarizing their experiences. Guided by these theories, Chinese traditional medicine preserved the prosperity of the Chinese people for more than 1,000 years.

The content of the theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing are bountiful; however, we can only briefly explain the more important aspects of the application of these theories in Chinese traditional medicine in this article.

I. Yin-yang

First, the theory of Yin-yang recognizes that Yin and Yang both have the universal significance of contradictions. All things in the world consist of two aspects, one of opposition, the other of unification, i.e., a "Yin" and a "Yang". The production, transformation and development of things are based on "Yin" and "Yang". For instance, heaven is Yang, earth is Yin; sun is Yang, moon is Yin; fire is Yang, water is Yin, etc. As for the human body, the exterior is Yang, the interior is Yin; upper portion is Yang, the lower is Yin; and the back is Yang, the abdomen Yin. As for functions: motion is Yang, immobility is Yin; heat is Yang, cold is Yin; and excess (shih) is Yang, deficiency (hsu) is Yin. As for the organs: the bowels are Yang and the viscera are Yin. Regarding the relationship between function and structure: Ch'i is Yang, "blood" is Yin ("Ch'i" represents the function and energy, while "blood" represents matter), etc. Any antagonism within the human body can be represented by Yin and Yang in countless ways. Though these opposites have their own special characteristics, they follow the Yin-yang's general law of motion. In the "Su-wen" Chapter of Nei-ching Yin and Yang can be manifested in tens, hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, and infinite ways, and yet, the principle starts from one. So, we can see that Yin and Yang are actually in mutual contradiction. Chinese traditional medicine discovered and applied this law from very early times and pointed out the existence of contradictions and their laws of change, asserting that these were the most fundamental of laws. As written in Nei-ching, "Yin-yang is the 'Way' of heaven and earth, the constitutional fibre of things, the progenitor of transformations, and the very beginning of birth and death....." It means that Yin-yang is the basic law which governs heaven and earth, and is the source of birth, death and transformations.

Yin-yang not only exists universally, but also in contradictions. Yin-yang is not simply accumulated, but is a complex composition which harbors contradictions within contradictions. As mentioned in "Su-wen", "there is Yang in Yin, and there is Yin in Yang". So we can readily see the complexities. Let us take as an example from our natural surroundings the contradictions of day and night, where day is Yang and night is Yin. However, when day is further analyzed, forenoon is Yang of Yang, and afternoon is Yin of Yang. In analyzing night, before midnight is Yin of Yin, and after midnight is Yang of Yin. These subdivisions in Yin-yang for night and day involve intricate investigation and are applied in clinical diagnoses of certain diseases. The cycle of change from night to day is an extremely valuable and important problem.

There is a very great practical significance in understanding the complexities of the contradiction in clinical practice. For instance, in the Discussion of Typhoid Fever (Shang-han Lun), this disease has been classified into six types, three types with Yang and three types with Yin. There are differences in principle in treating the diseases

of Yin or Yang category. However, in the same category of Yin or Yang diseases there are still the different treatments for each type of disease. Furthermore, the Yin and Yang categories of diseases can sometimes appear alternately; therefore in clinical practice, it is not simply distinguishing between Yin and Yang, but we must also make distinctions between Yang diseases mixed with Yin disease or vice versa. In the Discussion of Typhoid Fever (Shang-han Lun), the three purging method for "Shao-yang" disease is a good example. The "Shao-yang" disease is of the Yang category. It is a "cold deficiency" (Hsu-han) condition, and according to the treatment rules, purging is prohibited. Purging is the method for treating "Yang-ming" disease when the stomach and intestine are in an "excess heat" condition (je-shih). If the method of treating "cold deficiency" condition is used mistakenly, then the patient will become weaker and his condition will become exaggerated. However, when the "shao-yang" disease manifests the condition of "excess heat" in the stomach and intestine, the purging method in this case must be applied to purge the accumulated "heat" and undigested residue in the stomach and intestines. We can see from this that Chinese traditional medicine has correctly recognized the universal existence of contradictions and the intricate and complex nature of these contradictions.

The relationship between Yin and Yang is opposition and unification, mutual reliance and mutual continuing. Yin-yang are alternately forming cause and effect, perpetually moving and continuously developing. In the theories of the traditional Chinese physicians, these inter-relationships of Yin and Yang are called "mutually based on each other of Yin and Yang." This is not only one of the propositions of the theory of Yin-yang but also the theoretical foundation of Chinese traditional medicine. For instance, Chinese physicians consider foodstuffs that enter the human body to be Yin, and the functions of organs including the digestive process to be Yang. Foodstuffs (Yin) should go through the Yang functions of digestion, be conveyed by the human organs and be transformed into nutriments, (e.g. semen, blood and saliva, which are Yin.) We can see from this process the intimate inseparable and inter-reliant relationship which exists between matter and function. If organs did not have normal functions, food could not be either absorbed or utilized by the human body. Conversely, if no food entered the human body and was not transformed into various nutriments, maintenance of normal functions would be impossible. This sufficiently shows the mutual reliance and development of nutriment under normal physiological conditions and functions, and is an instance of the dialectic relationship.

Under the above-mentioned normal situations, "mutually based on each other by Yin and Yang", there is a balanced and harmonized relationship between Yin and Yang i.e., a dynamic balance between function of organs and visible matter. Considerable attention was paid to this balance between Yin and Yang in the Nei-ching, recognizing it as a condition of basic health. For instance, in the "Su-wen" Chapter of

Nei-ching, it says, "Only through the balance of Yin and Yang can the patient's spirit be good." A series of pathological phenomena will be produced if there is imbalance between Yin and Yang. For instance, the patient that has a deficiency in Yang (a decline of organ activity) can often have deficiencies in Yin (a deficiency in visible matter such as semen and blood). This is a change which occurs in the inter-reliance of Yin and Yang in pathological conditions. Moreover, under pathological situations, any side of Yin or Yang can often have abnormally vigorous activities which could overcome or hurt the normal activities of the other side. A pathological decline in one aspect might cause a corresponding rise in activity in another aspect. As mentioned in Nei-Ching, "If Yang dominates, Yin will be sick, and if Yin dominates, Yang will be sick. If Yang dominates, it will cause heat (je) or fever; and if the Yin dominates, it will cause cold (han)." Under pathological conditions, this shows interrelationship of dominancy and symptoms of the ailment. "If Yang dominates, then it will cause the sickness of Yin". It means that the over-vigorous Yang (an abnormal increase is "strong Yang (K'ang Yang), cannot make the Yin "Ch'i" develop in proportion with Yang, and that it will hurt the Yin liquid (yeh) causing more deficiencies of Yin, (e.g., a patient who has either a high temperature or one who has overactivated his organs and as a result has overconsumed body liquids and nutriment.) The clinical symptoms in this case are fever and excitement, which belong to both Yang and heat conditions; i.e., "if the Yang dominates, the patient will get fever." The reverse of this is also true. For instance, the excessive activity of the Yin "Ch'i" will clinically manifest a "deficient cold" condition. This is a case where Yin dominates and causes the sickness of cold."

We can see from the above-mentioned examples that when there is not a normally balanced condition of Yin and Yang, various diseases will be produced. Therefore, the Chinese consider the imbalance of Yin and Yang as the basic cause of sickness. How does the imbalance of Yin and Yang occur? It is caused by weakening of the normal "Ch'i" which, in turn, permits the infiltration of the evil "Ch'i". Under such situations, the normal "Ch'i" in the human body does its best to drive the evil "Ch'i" out to restore the balance of Yin and Yang. Therefore the imbalance of Yin and Yang is also the struggle process between the normal "Ch'i" and evil "Ch'i". In disease development, the normal and evil "Ch'i" are always in struggle and transformation. If the struggle is won by the normal "Ch'i", the evil "Ch'i" will then be completely driven out, resulting in convalescence. If there is failure of the normal "Ch'i" or a victory by the evil "Ch'i", then Yin and Yang are completely separated, causing the death of the patient. We can see from the above that the Chinese physicians give dialectic consideration to the disease cause and the resistance of the human body against the sickness and also recognize the fact that the concept of struggle between normal and evil "Ch'i" is the struggle of contradictions. This struggle takes as its foundation the existence of diametrical contradictions.

We also can see that in the struggle between the contradictions, there are two possible outcomes of complete recovery and death during its constant transformations and developments. Since the Chinese physicians have dialectic knowledge of these sicknesses, considerable attention is directed in clinical practices to analyze the relative strength of normal and evil "Ch'i" and removing the evil "Ch'i".

The theory of Yin-yang is applicable to physiology, pathology and pathological physiology. Moreover, the theory clarifies the rules of normal organ functions and causes of sickness. The theory of Yin-yang also plays an important role in diagnosis and treatment in addition to being the fundamental principles upon which diagnostics are based.

One of the important principles of diagnostics used by Chinese physicians is finding out inherent characteristics from a series of symptoms (i. e. Pien-cheng Shih-chih). From the long experiences gained through clinical practices, a series of principles for analyzing sickness have been formulated. These are the eight divisions of the table of Yin-yang; the divisions include cold (han), fever (je), deficiency (hsü), and excess (shih). The most important of all is the distinction of Yin and Yang, because it is the fundamental principle underlying the eight divisions. In Nei-ching, it again and again emphasized the importance of distinguishing Yin and Yang in diagnosing sickness. As mentioned in "Su-wen", "To first distinguish Yin and Yang, the good physician investigates the patient's appearance and feels his pulse." When the distinction of Yin and Yang is ascertained, the physician can then grasp the basic internal contradictions of the sickness. The principle of treating sickness by the Chinese physician is the balancing of Yin and Yang. Of course, since the complexity of the sickness changes, it is not sufficient only to distinguish Yin and Yang; one must identify the organs which are causing the sickness and clarify the mutual relationships. We will expand this point in detail later.

The principle of the "pien-cheng shih-chih" enables the Chinese physician to grasp the principal contradiction of the many contradictions by investigating the inherent characteristics of a phenomenon, and thus in this way the surface phenomena are not confused. For instance, symptoms of the patient's suffering from fever belongs to the heat (je) condition of the Yang category. However, if we are to analyze the inherent character of the sickness, a conclusion cannot be made just on these symptoms alone; the analysis must be conducted from an overall standpoint, because these are real or false "heat" conditions of the fever. Besides the fever (heat), if the patient is sensitive to heat, thirst, and has a quick pulse, then the symptoms indicate a real "heat" condition. But if a patient with a fever is not sensitive to heat and prefers to wear more clothes and have more bedding and is neither thirsty nor has a slow pulse, then these symptoms indicate that the inherent character of the sickness is not "heat" of the Yang category, but a "cold" (han) condition of the Yin category. We can see from the above that distinguishing between particular contradictions is

important in grasping the inherent character through investigation of the phenomena. The special forte of the "Pien-cheng Shih-chih" lies in the recognition of the fact that contradictions are dynamic and not static; and that with each different stage [of development], a different characteristic is revealed. If the patient is suffering from a "heat" condition of the Yang category, then he should be treated accordingly. But if after several days, we find that the sickness has been transformed into a "cold" condition of the Yin category because of either a wrong diagnosis or treatment, the physician has then to find new ways of treatment based on the detection of the transformation of the contradictions that occur in the many new phenomena.

We can see from the above discussion of some of the key points of the theory of Yin-yang that there are elements of dialectical materialism contained in the theories of Chinese traditional medicine.

II. Wu-hsing

The theory of Yin-yang states that things move according to the rule of opposition and unity of contradictions, and the theory of Wu-hsing explains the complicated relationship that exist among things. Our ancient people discovered that through analysis and study, the myriad things in nature could be reduced to simplicity; i.e., they could be placed into the five categories of wood, fire, earth, metal and water. It meant that all things could be explained by the characteristics and interrelationships of these five categories of matter. The ancient people used wood, fire, earth, metal and water every day. Different characteristics of each were used to generalize the characteristics of the five categories of matter, but also represents the five different patterns of the kinetic phenomena of matter.

Hence, Wu-hsing generalizes the characteristics and the mutual relationships of things. Therefore, all things are classified by their respective characteristics and relationships into Wu-hsing categories. This is also applicable to those things related to the science of medicine. Take seasons for an example: spring is wood, summer is fire, hot summer (June of the lunar calendar) is earth, autumn is metal, and winter is water. For climates: wind is wood, heat is fire, humidity is earth, drought is metal, and cold is water. For human organs and emotions: liver, gall, eye, muscle and anger are wood; heart, small intestine, tongue, pulse, and joy are fire; spleen, stomach, mouth, muscle, lip, and thinking are earth; lung, lower intestine, nose, skin, hair, and hatred are metal; and kidney, bladder, ear, bone, head, hair and fright are water. Those things under the same Wu-hsing category have a closer relationship than those in other categories, e.g., liver and gall; spleen, stomach and mouth-lip; and heart and pulse. These organs also have a more intimate relationship in physiology and pathology than those in other categories. However, those organs not in the same Wu-hsing category also have close affinities. These affinities are established according to the rules of "simultaneous birth" (hsiang-sheng)

and "inner conflicts" (hsiang-k'o). "Simultaneous birth" connotes "promoting" and "helping", whereas "inner conflict" connotes "restraining" and "overcoming". The rule of "simultaneous birth" of Wu-hsing is that wood gives birth to fire, fire gives birth to earth, earth gives birth to metal, metal gives birth to water, and water gives birth to wood. The rules of "inner conflict" of Wu-hsing are that wood vanquishes earth, earth vanquishes water, water vanquishes fire, fire vanquishes metal, and metal vanquishes wood. The relationships of human organs according to this rule are: liver-wood gives birth to heart-fire, heart-fire gives birth to spleen-earth, spleen-earth gives birth to lung-metal, lung-metal gives birth to kidney-water, and kidney-water gives birth to liver-wood. Moreover, liver-wood vanquishes spleen-earth, spleen-earth vanquishes kidney-water, kidney-water vanquishes heart-fire, heart-fire vanquishes lung-metal, lung-metal vanquishes liver-wood. The rules of "simultaneous birth" and "inner conflict" of Wu-hsing explain that in the activities of matter, things mutually promote and restrain each other. The human organs, by the mutual promotion and restraint, achieve a balanced condition. The balance will be jeopardized if a certain organ is abnormally vigorous or declining. In the case in which "simultaneous birth" or "inner conflict" are in excess or lacking, the organs will be corresponding [pathological] phenomena of over-prosperity or over-declining.

Human beings live in the environment of Nature. The conditions of Nature such as season, climate, temperature, and local characteristics will affect, to a certain degree, human health or sickness. The theory of Wu-hsing accurately reflects these conditions by relating natural phenomena to the human organs and emotions. This is the modern scientific viewpoint of medicine whereby the organs and environments are viewed as a unity. Therefore, in Chinese traditional medicine, the environment is never separated from the human element. For instance, spleen cannot operate well in humidity. By hot summer, humidity, spleen, and stomach are of the earth category. In summer, there is more humidity; consequently, the spleen and stomach are easily affected by the "evil humidity, causing diarrhea. Therefore, the correct treatment should be based on the principle of helping spleen-earth and removing the evil humidity. Climates of the south and north are different; therefore there are also differences in the use of medicine. These relationships are very obvious in Chinese traditional medicine. In the later generations, the theories of "the five-activities and the six gases" which even more intimately related human beings to Nature, and had a certain degree of significance to clinical practices was established, on the basis of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing.

As indicated in Chinese traditional medicine, the viewpoint of the unification of Man and his environment is one direction for our studies later on. The theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing provide explanations for many diseases from which foundations and clues for further study can be derived. For instance, some diseases of quick infection are generally not so serious in the forenoon and early morning,

but they are more serious in the afternoon and in the evening before midnight, and after midnight, the disease lessens its seriousness again. In modern medicine, there are no satisfactory explanations for these phenomena; however, Chinese traditional physicians have interpreted these phenomena according to the laws that govern the relationship of Man to the under-heavens [i.e., his environment.] The Chinese traditional physicians recognized that disease could only arise after the outer evil had entered the body, and there was a deterioration of the Yang Ch'i ["Ether"]. The forenoon of every day, according to the variations of Yin-yang, is the Yang of Yang, and the afternoon is the Yin of Yang, the evening period before midnight is Yin of Yin and after midnight is the Yang of Yin. Because of the interaction between Man and the Underheavens, the Yang "Ch'i" of the human body is most abundant in the forenoon, but in the afternoon, the Yang "Ch'i" begins to decline with the lowest point occurring sometime during the evening period before midnight. After midnight, the Yang "Ch'i" begins to rise again. For this reason, some acute and contagious diseases are milder in the morning and forenoon; and are serious in the afternoon and evening, especially in the evening period before midnight. This concept of interaction and change of the Yin-yang of the human body and with the Yin-yang of the Underheavens is worthy of our attention. If we probe into these situations deeper, we believe that we will be able to provide new knowledge to modern medicine.

The theory of Wu-hsing further reflects the organic relationship of the various parts of the human body and from this establishes the total body unity concept. Therefore, Chinese traditional medicine never isolates an organ apart from the whole body, and also does not limit itself to the area affected. In Nei-ching, it says, "Check the lower side if there is sickness in the upper side, and check the upper side if there is the sickness in the lower side". This is logical. The following examples can more concretely explain this point. For example, in the treatment of dropsy, it is not sufficient merely to pay attention to the edema and drainage, but the spleen and stomach should be re-invigorated, besides extracting water. According to the rules of the "simultaneous birth" and "inner conflict" of Wu-hsing, earth vanquished water, and since the spleen and stomach are of the earth category, re-invigoration of spleen and stomach can restrain water. A condition in which the lung is weakened is another example. Re-invigorating the spleen and stomach should also be considered in this case and not simply the treatment of the lung, because earth can give birth to metal, and since lung is of the metal category, re-invigoration of the spleen and stomach can also strengthen lung functions. If the liver is diseased, it can very easily affect the spleen and stomach, because liver-wood can vanquish spleen-earth. Therefore, as soon as sickness in the liver is discovered, attention should be paid to protecting the spleen and stomach. The above examples are concrete applications of the theory of Wu-hsing.

Yin-yang explains the contradictory relationship of things in

opposition and unification. Wu-hsing illustrates that things are not isolated but are unified and mutually promoting and restraining each other. These two theories supplement each other, and neither can be over-emphasized or abolished. In fact, as early as the Warring States period, the theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing were combined in forming a more complete system of ideas.

III. The Application of the Theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing in Clinical Practice

The extremely efficacious results in clinical practice by Chinese traditional therapy cannot be separated from the correct guidance they received from their theories. Medical treatment results of Chinese traditional medicine have illustrated this problem. Take encephalitis for example. Chinese physicians have achieved satisfactory results in the treatment of epidemic type B encephalitis. In 1958, there were 31 of type B encephalitis which were treated by Chinese physicians in the Peiping Hospital of Chinese Traditional Medicine. All patients were cured, and the principal symptoms disappeared after medicine had been taken for one or two days. In the same year, Chinese physicians treated 1,035 cases of Type B encephalitis in Kwangtung Province, curing 90% of them. The medicine used in treating encephalitis is principally the hsiu-liang-chung drug, Pai-hu t'ang. Encephalitis is a sickness inclined toward heat (je); therefore, the objective of the treatment should be the removal of the evil heat. This reasoning is very apparent because Type B encephalitis belongs to the traditional categories of hot-warm (shu-wen) and moist-warm (shih-wen), and it principally manifests intense "evil heat" (hsieh-je) or an accumulation of "moist-muddiness" (shih-cho) in the heart which has toppled the Yin-yang balance in the body. Therefore, in the early stages of encephalitis, the physician's treatment should be based on the principle, "cool the heat sickness". Nei-ching, hence, use Hsin-liang-chung drugs to remove the evil heat and correct the imbalance. For patients with an affinity for the humid, the "bitter and mild infiltration method" (K'u-hsin-wei-wen-tan-shen-fa) should be adopted to remove the "moist-muddiness", thus restoring the balance of Yin and Yang. If, on the other hand, the "evil" is vigorous, and the "normal" is weak and the Yang is injured and the "Ch'i" is diminishing, then helping the "normal" (cheng) by increasing Pai-hu-t'ang together with Yang tonics, e.g., *Rehmannia glutinosa*, *Libosch.* and *Scrophularia oldhami*, *oliv.*, or ginseng to support the normal "ch'i" should be emphasized. We can see that the cause of sickness is the imbalance of Yin and Yang. We should pay constant attention to the development of the disease during treatment so that we can appropriately restore the balance of Yin and Yang.

The treatment method must be altered in accordance with the natural environment, especially in the seasonal and climatic effects on the human body. This is one of the principal special characteristics

of Chinese traditional medicine. This special characteristic enables Chinese traditional physicians to find a basis for conversion treatment [?] (pien-huan chih-liao) out of the many and varied types of changes that occur in disease. For instance, in treating measles and pneumonia with measles, the old Chinese physician P'u Fu-chou (蒲輔周) of the Peiping Research Institute of Chinese Traditional Medicine recognized that one of the key factors which would advance the treatment effect was to base and skillfully adjust the treatment method on the different seasons during the sickness. The treatment of measles in the four seasons of spring, summer, autumn and winter can be similarly treated in fully bringing out the disease potential (宣洩) [sic]. Although the climate gradually turns mild from midwinter to "vernal equinox" (from the last third of January to the last third of March), the winter cold still remains to a certain degree; therefore, the "Hsin-p'ing-wei wen prescriptions" are generally used in the early stages of measles to fully bring out the disease potential. From "vernal equinox" to the beginning of summer (from the last third of March to the first third of May), the climate is warmer; therefore, we should mix in the prescription which would bring out the disease potential medicine of the K'u-han-sheng-chin variety. From the beginning of summer to the summer solstice (the first third of May to the last third of June), there is more heat; therefore, we should use the medicine of the Hsin-liang category mixed with the heavier K'u-han variety. From the summer solstice to the first day of autumn (the last third of June to the first third of August), the climate is both hot and humid; therefore, the disease has to be separately treated as very hot and very humid. From the first day of autumn to the opening of winter (the first third of August to the first third of November), the climate becomes gradually colder; therefore, we must use the prescription of Hsin-liang category mixed with the Hsin-p'ing category. From the beginning of winter to the period of lesser cold in mid-winter, the climate turns cold; therefore the prescription should be principally K'u-wen with an added mixture of Hsin-liang. In short, since human beings live in a natural environment, the Yin-yang variations of the natural environment can affect the Yin-yang variations of the human body. Therefore different diseases can be caused in different seasons, and an identical disease in different seasons can also require different treatment. This principle has great significance as a guide for the clinical treatment.

In treating Yin deficiencies that bring about intermittent fever and night-sweats, the Chinese physicians do not focus on manifestations of the sickness and directly use K'u-han medicine to ameliorate the fever, but use "six flavored yellow earth pills" (Liu-wei Ti-huan). This medicine nourishes the Yin, thus supplementing Yin to attract the Yang. Because the phenomenon of heat [fever] is the subordinate factor and the Yin deficiency is the original factor, Yin deficiency cannot attract or receive Yang "Ch'i". The Yang rises up as the false phenomena of red cheeks and recurrent fever. By supplementing the Yin, the Yin-yang balance will be restored and the phenomenon of the false heat removed. That is, "restraining the Yang (sun) light is the principle of vigorous

water". With the same reasoning, Chinese physicians consider "cold (leng) abscess" caused by tuberculosis of the bone joints to be Yang-huo (fire) deficiency and a condensation of the Yin-han (cold). The physician should use the "Yang harmonizing soup" (Yang-ho-t'ang) to supplement Yang so that the Yin-han will be deliquesced and dissipated of its own accord. This is the principle of "adding more fuel to the fire to remove the cloud of dust (Yin-mai)". We can see from above that the balance of Yin and Yang is the basic objective of treatment, and the imbalance of Yin and Yang is caused by either the excessive prosperity of one side, or the excessive decline of the other. Therefore, in the treatment, there are the differences of "removing the surplus" and "supplementing the deficiency."

As clinical experiences have proven, it is insufficient only to rely on tonics which nourish the blood in quickly remedying anaemia caused by excessive hemorrhaging. Great quantities of reinvigorating "Ch'i" medicine should also be added simultaneously to quickly turn the anaemia symptoms. This is because "Yin and Yang are reliant on each other" and "If Yang is born, then Yin will grow." Therefore medicine which re-invigorates "Ch'i" functions as an aid to invigorate the blood. Some patients with a "Ch'i" deficiency can hemorrhage; therefore in the treatment, it is not only necessary to nourish the "blood" but also necessary to re-invigorate the "Ch'i", because "Ch'i" is the commander of blood, and blood is the residence of "Ch'i". If the "Ch'i" is deficient, then control of the blood's movement is lost. If control is lost, then there will be disorderly coursing through mistaken paths. Therefore the "Ch'i" deficiency can cause hemorrhaging; thus the treatment should be reinvigoration of "Ch'i". With sufficient "Ch'i", blood can circulate normally without the phenomenon of loss of blood. We can see here that the inter-reliant relationship of Yin and Yang can be proven in clinical practice. The above illustrates that the ancient physicians recognized the existence of universal contradictions in their practice which underlie the relationship. There are certain rules of contradictions. People have realized these rules from constant experience; hence when they are applied in practice, significant effects can be obtained.

The application of the theory of Wu-hsing to the science of medicine aids concrete analysis and diagnosis of sickness which, of course, has very important practical significance in clinical practice. For instance, some patients are easily excited to anger and have uneven temperament. The Chinese physicians call these "melancholia of the liver" (Kar yü). These patients often have spleen and stomach conditions, such as stomach-ache, nausea, vomiting of acid liquids, stomach rumbling, diarrhea, and indigestion. In treating these conditions, Chinese physicians often start by treating the liver. For example, there were 24 cases of gastric and duodenal ulcers which were treated in the Peng-pu Third Municipal Hospital by the method of softening the liver and harmonizing the stomach with no severe restrictions placed on the diet, except one case which required surgery of a pyloric obstruction. In the other 23 cases, 15 cases recovered and there were eight cases with ameliorated conditions

out of the 23. The majority of complete recovery cases were relieved from pain and the accompanying neurasthenia within three weeks. The relapse rate after one year's inspection was 8.6%. 63 cases of the gastric and duodenal ulcers were treated by the Fukein People's Hospital with a recovery rate of 82.5%. A majority of the patients was gradually relieved from the pain two to five days after taking medicine. After one or two weeks, the general symptoms were relieved and cured. The medicines used were those of softening the liver and regulating the "Ch'i"

in this case breathing]. Why is the liver treated with the sickness is in the stomach? Why only treat the liver? Is it effective? What is the relationship between anxiety and the conditions of spleen and stomach? According to the classification of Wu-hsing, liver is of the wood category, spleen and stomach are of the earth category. From the principle of "inner conflict" of Wu-hsing, the strong wood can overcome earth; therefore the "melancholia of liver" indicating uneven temperament can produce a series of spleen and stomach sicknesses. So by treating the liver, the stomach sickness can also be relieved and cured. This is an effective method of treating the source. We can see the application of the theory of Wu-hsing in the complicated relationships of individual sickness causes and the various conditions in finding out the rule by which to rationally interpret many relationships and also in determining the correct course for treatment.

In short, judging from the effectiveness of clinical practices used by Chinese physicians, we believe that the theoretical foundation of Chinese medicine, Yin-yang and Wu-hsing, has many scientific and practical values. First of all, these theories point out the universality of contradictions, view sickness as the result of imbalance of Yin and Yang and have as their treatment goal the restoration of Yin-yang balance. The starting point of therapy is also the use of medicines which harmonize the Yin-yang in the body and restore and unify the Yin-yang contradictions of the organs. Hence, the theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing consider the rules of contradiction and unification to be the fundamental rule governing material activities. The theory of Wu-hsing further concretely explains the relationships that exist among things. With these concepts, Chinese physicians have had comparatively accurate comprehension of physiological and pathological conditions of the human body which have served as correct guides for treatment. Therefore, the theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing are not mystic theories; on the contrary, they are epistemological and methodological and contain the elements of dialectical materialism.

[Conclusion]

From our discussion and the examples cited, we can see that the continuation and development of the theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing in recent years have met with considerable success. First, the broad mass of medical workers have acknowledged the fact that these theories are based on dialectical materialism; hence they are scientific. Some people

have already interpreted and induced these theories from the philosophical viewpoint of dialectical materialism with modern terms to facilitate the acceptance of these theories by the broad mass of medical workers, so that further research may be conducted. This is only the beginning, for Chinese traditional medicine is a great treasure house of information. Research into the theoretical aspects of it is extremely difficult and complex, and the discovery of the essence of these theories still awaits our efforts.

The theories of Yin-yang and Wu-hsing were established by our ancestors more than 2,000 years ago. Because of the existing historical conditions at that time, there were unavoidable shortcomings in the theories of immediacy, spontaneity, and forced analogies. We should not only treat the problem from the standpoint of historical materialism, but also follow the Party's instruction to systematically study and obtain an overall grasp of the problems. We should, furthermore, utilize the modern scientific tool of Marxism-Leninism to more efficiently organize them, thus bringing about smoother and more accurate guiding procedures.

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[Note: translations of source titles are arbitrary]

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